

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, author of the Child Soldiers Prevention Act, made the following statement after President Obama announced full waivers from prohibitions enacted in the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 for Libya, South Sudan, and Yemen, and a partial waiver for the Democratic Republic of Congo, continuing foreign assistance to these major international violators of the child soldiers prohibition.

"The unthinkable practice of the use of children as soldiers continues in the world today," Fortenberry said. "The United States must not be complicit in this practice. The announcement of waivers for countries should only be for carefully discerned prudential reasons to help force countries away from this pernicious practice. The intent of the law is clear - the waiver authority should be used as a mechanism for reform, not as a way of continuing the status quo."

Libya is a new addition this year, while Chad was removed from the waiver list. Burma, Somalia, and Sudan are prohibited from receiving foreign military financing and international military training assistance under the law.

Fortenberry is the Vice-Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights.

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